

## **LOS ANGELES HEALTHY HOMES OUTREACH PROJECT**

**Esperanza Community Housing Corporation**

**Year of Grant: 2000**

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Esperanza Community Housing Corporation (EHC) is a non-profit, community-based organization with an eleven-year history of working to achieve comprehensive long term community development in the Maple/Adams-Hoover/Adams neighborhood of South Central Los Angeles. The primarily low income community is predominantly Latino and African American. This is a densely populated area of approximately 130,000 people residing in some of the oldest of the city's housing, within an area not much larger than four square miles. Sixteen percent of all lead poisoning cases diagnosed between 1991 and 1997 in Los Angeles County come from this area. EHC has a successful track record in providing crucial community services and promoting economic development. EHC has completed new construction or significant rehabilitation of seven buildings of family housing, begun work on three additional affordable housing developments in area described above, created two community centers, and spearheaded a successful effort to create a community park. EHC has also created the Community Health Promoters Program which trains bilingual community residents to become community health leaders, patient advocates and health educators, improving access to health care and information.

EHC is proposing a Los Angeles Healthy Homes Outreach Project in collaboration with Strategic Actions for a Just Economy (SAJE), Los Angeles County Department Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention Program (CLPPP), and Saint John's Well Child Center (SJWCQ). Consultants to this Project will be Occupational Knowledge, Inc. (OK, Inc.), Camroden Associates (CAI), and Dr. Diana Capman Dolan and Dr. Brian Dolan. Dynamic Workers Cooperative (DWC) will be subcontracted through this project.

EHC is currently in Year Two of a two-year HUD-funded Lead Health Education and Outreach Project (Grant #: CALHR0035-98). The project was designed as the first phase in a project to build community capacity and empowerment regarding healthy homes and lead-safe environments for children. Under this grant, EHC has built Healthy Homes community capacity by training three successive groups of Community Health Promoters (CHPs). To date, these CHPS have implemented 130 surveys and visual inspections, facilitated 385 blood lead tests, and conducted more than fifty four community presentations. Through these community presentations and health fairs the CHPS have provided Healthy Homes Outreach and Education to more than 3,200 people.

The three-year Los Angeles Healthy Homes Outreach Project proposed herein will focus on one low-income, minority census tract (# 2244) in our service area which has been designated by the County of Los Angeles as a "Lead Hot Zone." EHC is currently developing three affordable housing projects in four former slum buildings in the area. We have been working with our collaborative partners since 1998 on developing our Healthy Homes capacity in this particular area to train three

cadres of community workers: ECHC Community Health Promoters, Dynamic Workers' Cooperative Lead Abatement Workers and Clean-and-Stabilize Workers. We have developed a door-to-door survey to learn from community residents about their family size, ages and health; medical insurance; blood lead status; knowledge of potential lead hazards in the home, etc.

The strategy of the Los Angeles Healthy Homes Outreach Project is designed to develop and coordinate an interagency, interdisciplinary approach aimed at:

- Primary prevention of lead poisoning, asthma and chronic illness, particularly focused on pregnant women and children six years and under through education and outreach.
- Promotion of timely housing interventions in cases of pregnant women and children identified as having elevated blood levels.
- Promotion of timely housing interventions by conducting visual inspections and risk assessments of units, and addressing findings through tenant organizing and outreach.
- Leveraging Los Angeles City Department of Building and Safety and HUD Code Enforcement to bring owners of substandard, unsafe housing into compliance.
- Creating economic opportunities for community residents, thus addressing the issue of poverty that underlies unhealthy housing conditions in our community.
- Building community capacity in certified Lead Abatement Construction work.
- Evaluating, documenting and promoting a successful model that can be replicated in a seamless and cost efficient manner.

Work will be accomplished through ongoing community capacity development (Lead Abatement Construction, lead and other environmental hazards, asthma prevention and management training; tenant rights and organizing; lead industry and CLPPP internship opportunities); conducting interventions within 1,700 target area homes (85% of occupied units in the area) to collect family health and housing data; blood lead testing of 900 target area children 6 years old and younger; and making all knowledge gleaned through data collection available to tenants. Data collection will lead to negotiations with local property owners to bring their buildings up to health and safety standards or face consequences which this project will clearly delineate and be prepared to pursue.

The ECHC Healthy Homes Outreach Project will advance HUD's goals and priorities for Healthy Homes by providing a living example of what is possible in the following areas:

- Preventing lead poisoning and other adverse consequences of substandard housing before they happen
- Improving early intervention by expanding blood lead screening and follow-up services
- Building effective collaboration between public and private agencies
- Promoting cost-effective lead-safe strategies that can make Healthy Homes a reality
- Focusing resources, education, and demonstrable results to assist private property owners in making cost-efficient improvements to their housing that will make a significant difference in the quality of life of the community.
- Making Section III Compliance meaningful and fulfillable in this community
- Impacting Welfare-to-Work participants through an innovative banking pilot collaborative

- Creating sustainable Healthy Homes jobs: The Dynamic Workers Cooperative is a worker-owned enterprise that will take the experience of this outreach project to higher income markets to assure good-paying, sustainable jobs that promote community health.
- Conducting effective research and evaluation presented in annual project reports
- Integrating workers into community health practice: community workers hired in this project all live in inner-city apartment buildings. They have also had to learn about the equally dangerous hazards which may lurk in their homes and communities and thus they may become the most articulate advocates of Healthy Homes in Los Angeles.